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ABSTRACT

One of six projects funded by P.L. 93-247 state grant money, the Foster Child Advocate Services (FOCAS) Project established a guardian "ad litem" program in which court-approved members of the community volunteered to visit children in Texas State Department of Human Resources Conservatorships. Part I of the report, describing the objectives and accomplishments of the FOCAS project, discusses the methods used to protect children and to make the community more aware of the needs of children under conservatorship. Problems encountered in establishing the "ad litem" program are also described. Part II, reporting on a part process/part impact evaluation, provides information solicited from project attorneys, guardians, workers, and foster parents and institutional staff involved with the children. Evaluation questionnaires were designed to gather information about the project objectives, including the issues of permanent planning decisions, information for attorneys, community education, increasing contacts with children and identifying maltreatment, and solving problems encountered in court-ordered care. Most respondents felt the overall project and concept were valuable, although some of the specific objectives met with mixed responses. However, dissatisfaction due to unmet expectations, miscommunication, and varying degrees of commitment from some of the guardians "ad litem" were evident. Evaluation questionnaires are appended. (Author/RH)

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Final Report: Innovations in Protective Services

P.L. 93-247 Grant Award #06C23/08

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Office of Programs
Texas Department of Human Resources

FOSTER CHILD ADVOCATE SERVICES PROJECT

Final Report

September 1, 1982, through August 31, 1984

September 3[illegible], 1984

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Special appreciation goes to people at headquarters in Austin who supported the project. Linda Fleming, program specialist, served as liaison with the Protective Services for Families and Children Program. From the Office of Research, Demonstration, and Evaluation (ORDE)--headed by Assistant Commissioner Suzette Ashworth, Ph.D.--efforts were contributed by several members of ORDE's Research and Demonstration Division, which is administered by Kent Gummerman, Ph.D. Ruth Rubio and Barbara K. Richardson wrote the grant applications; Sharon Belk evaluated the project; Lucretia Dennis-Small monitored progress and prepared federal reports. Nicholas Constant and Phyllis Jamar edited and produced project documents.

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

Six projects, funded by P.L. 93-247 state grant money and jointly entitled Innovations in Protective Services, tested ideas for improving protective services for children. Overall goals established for the six projects were to--

- o strengthen permanent planning,
- o maximize the use of volunteers,
- o strengthen intake and investigation,
- o strengthen in-home service delivery, and
- o expand the usefulness of information systems.

Additional goals and objectives were developed for each project.

The six projects are Project to Study Fair-Hearings Practices in Child Protective Services; Impact of Protective Services; Coordinated Approach to Investigations and Information-Sharing; Group Services for Child Protective Clients; Foster Child Advocate Services; and Multidisciplinary Institute for Child Sexual Abuse Intervention and Treatment Project.

Copies can be obtained by writing to--

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Foster Child Advocate Services (FOCAS) Project final report contains a process description and an impact evaluation. FOCAS was a guardian ad litem program, in which court-approved members of the community volunteered their services to visit children in DHR conservatorship.

Part I, process description, discusses the methods used to ensure protection of children and to make the general community more aware of the needs of children under conservatorship of the Texas Department of Human Resources (DHR). The problems that the project staff encountered while establishing the ad litem program are described, and the project's accomplishments are outlined.

Part II, impact evaluation, reports on information solicited from four groups involved with the children and the project (attorneys, guardians, workers, and foster parents/institutional staff).

Although there were mixed results for some of the specific objectives, most individuals felt the overall project and concept were valuable. There did seem to be dissatisfaction due to unmet expectations, miscommunication, and varying degrees of commitment from some of the guardians ad litem, which put a negative tone on some of the results.

PART I:

Process Description

OVERVIEW

The Foster Child Advocate Services (FOCAS) Project, conducted in Region 4 of the Texas Department of Human Resources (DHR), was a guardian ad litem program. Guardians ad litem are court-appointed members of the community who have volunteered their services to visit children in DHR conservatorship. Visits by the guardians allow a third party to observe the child's care arrangement and identify problems that may occur. FOCAS volunteers received training on (1) the legal system as it pertains to child welfare and (2) DHR's Protective Services for Families and Children Program.

FIRST PROJECT YEAR

OBJECTIVES

Children in the FOCAS Project received periodic visits from their guardians ad litem; information about the children's needs was shared among the project staff, the legal system, the community, and the protective services program as appropriate. The goals were to ensure the protection of children and to make the general community more aware of the needs of these children. To accomplish these goals, the following objectives were set:

- Objective 1--to provide pertinent information about a child's situation to the court and the child welfare staff for use in planning decisions;
- Objective 2--to provide pertinent information to attorneys ad litem so that their responsibilities to the children are better fulfilled;
- Objective 3--to educate the community about child welfare services and the needs of children in the child welfare system;
- Objective 4--to increase the number of contacts with children in substitute care;
- Objective 5--to identify and determine the extent of maltreatment of children in substitute care; and

- Objective 5--to facilitate the resolution of problems encountered by children in court-ordered care.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

The activities of the project were carried out by the volunteer coordinator, guardians ad litem, the Wichita County legal system, and the Wichita County child welfare unit (which operates through contract with the regional DHR office). A training curriculum was developed and guardians were trained as they were appointed by the courts. Late start-up and difficulties with insurance for volunteers resulted in few court appointments of guardians ad litem during the first year. Therefore, it was decided to continue the project for a second year.

SECOND PROJECT YEAR

OBJECTIVES

In its second year, the project operated through a contractual agreement with the Wichita Foundation for Children's Services, Inc. (WFCS), a non-profit organization set up to consolidate the project's fiscal responsibilities and activities. It was anticipated that the second year of the project would provide sufficient data to evaluate the ad litem program. Second-year objectives for the project were--

- Objective 1--to provide pertinent information about a child's situation to the court and the child welfare staff for use in planning decisions;

- Objective 2--to provide pertinent information to attorneys ad litem so that their responsibilities to the children are better fulfilled;

- Objective 3--to educate the community about child welfare services and the needs of children in the child welfare system; and

- Objective 4--to increase the number of purposeful contacts with children in substitute care;

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Guardians Ad Litem

Since the start-up of this project, the courts appointed 23 guardians to represent 23 children.

The guardians met as a group to attempt to actively involve attorneys ad litem in cases prior to court appearances. The guardians felt this approach would give attorneys more information on case progress and would put them in a better position to make recommendations. As they became involved in their cases, guardians received additional training. Also, they shared experiences and problems they encountered and discussed possible solutions with the coordinator and among themselves.

Several cases to which guardians ad litem were assigned reached resolution during the past year. Some of the most outstanding examples of the guardians' influence are recounted below.

- o A guardian ad litem took the initiative in convening a case consultation meeting to discuss a child 3 1/2 years old who had lingered in foster care for three years. The meeting included the guardian, caseworker, child protective services (CPS) supervisor, members of the child welfare board, and the attorney ad litem. Subsequent to this meeting, the attorney petitioned for a court hearing on revocation of parental rights, so that a permanent placement for the child could proceed--a step that the child's father previously had resisted. However, after he was notified that a date had been set for the court hearing, the father finally agreed to relinquish parental rights.

- o In another instance, a guardian ad litem helped resolve problems that arose when two children were placed in a foster home that already contained two other foster children. The guardian's routine visits identified friction in the situation that was stressful to all concerned. After consideration of various factors, the situation was resolved by keeping the two newly placed children in the foster home and moving the other two, who were older, into a local group home for children.

- o A guardian furnished information to the attorney ad litem and the court about a child's ambivalence over being adopted. The guardian spent a great deal of time allowing the child to

vent feelings of frustration, anger, and fear about her coming placement. The guardian's intervention resulted in the child being adopted, and placement appears to be successful.

- In another case, the guardian and the attorney collaborated in approaching a judge to request resolution of a child's lengthy stay in foster care without any decision about forthcoming hearings or visible plans. There is still no resolution in this case.

Throughout the year, court-appointed guardians ad litem continued to visit children in Wichita County on a monthly basis. Children from Wichita County residing in institutions outside the county were visited once every six months. Written reports on all visits were submitted to the volunteer coordinator, who forwarded them to the CPS supervisor for inclusion in the child's permanent case record.

Contact with child welfare staff members was frequent. In all cases, collaborating recommendations were made to the courts and attorneys ad litem by guardians and child welfare caseworkers.

During the year, volunteers contacted the attorney ad litem for their cases to introduce themselves as the guardian ad litem assigned to the child and to indicate their interest in resolving the child's case. As each child's situation was explored, the attorneys were informed in person or by telephone of the volunteers' findings.

Community Education

Throughout the project, members of the WFCS board of directors continued presentations to the community and to representatives of local foundations. The latter were approached about the possibility of continuation funding for the guardian ad litem program at the end of the grant period. Through such appeals, the community became more aware of the project.

The brochure planned for publicizing the project was completed. Printing and labor costs were donated to WFCS by an area businessman. The brochure was used to inform the general public and other social service agencies about the ad litem program and its purposes.

PROBLEMS AREAS AND RESOLUTIONS

Not all judges in Wichita County supported the guardian ad litem program. One judge took the position that guardians ad litem could not be legally appointed by the courts and involved in CPS cases. Consequently, the number of guardians appointed was far fewer than project staff members had anticipated. Two other judges did appoint guardians for children in DHR conservatorship.

Guardians ad litem were instructed to report any suspected incidents of maltreatment of children in substitute care. The guardians were instructed to contact the volunteer coordinator, who would forward the information to the CPS supervisor for an assessment of the alleged situation. If the project coordinator were unavailable, the CPS supervisor would have been notified directly. However, no cases of maltreatment of children in substitute care were reported.

CONTINUATION OF THE AD LITEM PROGRAM

The guardian ad litem program will continue past the federally funded grant period. The project staff and WFCS board members raised $29,000, twice the amount of their current budget.

In the second year, refinement of the training curriculum continued. Due to the early resignation of the volunteer coordinator, the documented curriculum was not completed by the end of the grant period.

Video equipment was purchased, and future training sessions will be videotaped for use by incoming volunteers.

PART II:

IMPACT EVALUATION

BACKGROUND

Children in the conservatorship of the Texas Department of Human Resources (DHR) may be placed either in an institutional setting or in a foster home. When substitute care is no longer considered necessary, the child may return home (own-home care) and the family may continue to receive services. In any placement, there is a possibility of further abuse or neglect, especially since budget and staff cuts limit the number of worker visits intended to detect and remedy such occurrences.

In response to the possibility of abuse and neglect occurring undetected, the Foster Child Advocate Services (FOCAS) Project was established in 1982 in Wichita County in DHR's Region 4. Currently completing its second year, the project involves recruiting and training volunteer guardians ad litem, court-appointed community volunteers who visit children receiving protective services. FOCAS volunteers receive training on protective services for children and the legal system as it pertains to child welfare, observe the children's care arrangements, and identify problems that may occur.

Guardians ad litem are regarded as extensions of the court, as advocates for the children. They provide information to the courts, to the attorney ad litem, and to the child welfare worker about any abuse, neglect, or inadequacies of the child's placement related to the physical needs of the child. The guardians are expected to monitor court proceedings and permanent planning and are urged to participate in case consultation team meetings on children to whom they are assigned.

PURPOSES OF THE EVALUATION

The FOCAS Project has completed the two years for which funding was provided. The main purpose of this evaluation is to meet the requirements and information needs of the federal funding source. It is an effort to assess the degree to which goals were met during the two-year period.

A second purpose of this evaluation is to provide information to the FOCAS Project staff, since the project will continue to provide services past the two-year funding period just completed. Much of the information obtained for this evaluation will be of use to project staff in a formative sense: as the project continues to evolve to meet changing needs, evaluative information may reveal directions for expansion and resolutions to problems.

METHODOLOGY

DESIGN

This project evaluation was planned to have a two-group matched comparison group design. This would have allowed the use of inferential techniques to assess differences in the progress of two groups of children, one receiving project services and one not. However, the group of project children was small enough to raise questions regarding the validity of results that would be obtained and, for this reason, the plan was amended. The current design has a single group, with posttest (after implementation) data only. Key individuals were sent a survey instrument to allow them to report their perceptions of the impact of project activities.

INSTRUMENTATION

Four questionnaires (see Appendix A), corresponding to four key groups, served as the foundation for data collection. The four groups identified as information sources are (1) attorneys ad litem, (2) child welfare workers, (3) foster parents/institutional staff, and (4) guardians ad litem.

The questionnaires were designed to capture information believed to be most relevant for addressing issues set out in the six project objectives. All questionnaires overlapped to some degree, asking about the child's current placement setting and the length of time the individual had been associated with the child's case. All questionnaires also contained a section for open-ended, unstructured comments from the respondents, and a question about the value of the project in general. The questions then diverge and tap particular areas of expertise within each group.

DATA SOURCES AND COLLECTION PROCEDURES

There are two primary sources of data used in the present evaluation. The first primary source consists of the questionnaires just discussed. They were mailed from state office to Wichita Falls, with return envelopes provided. Twenty-three questionnaires, one for each child served by the FOCAS Project, were sent to each group, making a total of 92 questionnaires sent, of which 72 were returned representing the 23 children.

Shortly after the due date for returns, nonrespondents were reminded to return their questionnaires. Later, telephone calls were made in an effort to secure the information, and some of the questionnaires were completed over the phone. During these phone interviews more in-depth comments were received; this information led to a greater understanding of some of the problems the FOCAS Project had encountered as well as areas in which the project had succeeded.

The second primary source of data is a report by the FOCAS coordinator of volunteers. This report, derived from project records, contained information on guardian ad litem activities and activities that took place as part of the FOCAS community education effort.

RESULTS/STATUS OF OBJECTIVES

The FOCAS Project has six objectives that provide the framework for this evaluation. The following section begins with a presentation of results as they relate to the specific objectives and concludes with more general comments on the overall program.

OBJECTIVE 1—INFORMATION FOR PERMANENT PLANNING DECISIONS

Objective 1 was to provide pertinent information about a child's situation to the court and child welfare staff for use in permanent planning decisions.

The report of the FOCAS coordinator provided information on the frequency of contacts between (1) the guardian ad litem and individuals in the legal system and (2) between the guardian and child welfare workers. Reports were submitted to the courts on behalf of 6 of the 23 children; in 15 of the cases one or more court appearances were made by guardians ad litem; and contacts with the county attorney were made regarding 15 children. One or more contacts were made with child welfare workers by guardians ad litem in 19 of the cases.

Child welfare workers assessed the pertinence of the information provided by the guardians. Using a six-point Likert-type scale, pertinence of information was rated "not at all helpful/pertinent," a rating of one, to "very helpful/ pertinent," a rating of five. If the item was not applicable to the situation, a zero rating was given. The mean ratings, based only on nonzero responses, are presented in table II-1.

The ratings reveal that some reports were more relevant to the workers' activities than others, and, when applicable, were at least moderately helpful in decisions made in the child's case. The workers

indicated that a permanent plan had been identified for all of the children. For 14 of the children, permanent placement was achieved, and 7 of the children were returned home.

Table II-1
Average Helpfulness Ratings

Item	Mean Rating	N of Cases
Development of a service plan	3.28	18
Working relationship with child	3.85	20
Working relationship with foster parents/institutional staff	3.89	19
Working relationship with natural parents	3.08	12
Returning child to own home	3.71	17
Court hearings	3.90	20
Development of permanent plan	4.05	20

OBJECTIVE 2—INFORMATION FOR ATTORNEYS

Objective 2 was to provide pertinent information to attorneys ad litem so that their responsibilities to the children are better fulfilled.

Attorneys ad litem represent the child's interest during court review of the child's placement. Guardians ad litem have the responsibility of providing information to the attorney ad litem regarding the child's status in substitute or own-home care. This information should aid the attorney ad litem in making decisions and recommendations concerning the child.

Attorneys responded to a question asking them whether a court review of the child's case had taken place and, if so, to assess the pertinence/helpfulness of the information provided by the guardian ad litem in preparing for the court review. The same Likert-type scale was used. Respondents to this question indicated that a court review had taken place for all of the 11 children for whom questionnaires were returned. A mean rating of 3.56 was assigned to the pertinence/

helpfulness of the information provided by the guardian ad litem (based on nonzero responses only).

OBJECTIVE 3—COMMUNITY EDUCATION

Objective 3 was to educate the community about child welfare services and the needs of children in the child welfare system.

Two types of educational activities have been undertaken by FOCAS Project staff. The first type is volunteer recruitment and training. Volunteers not only perform their designated responsibilities as guardians ad litem, but also become informal spokespersons for the project who can inform their own organizations, as well as others, about child welfare needs and services. As of July 17, 1984, 22 volunteers had been recruited. Of this number 16 were trained, and 13 were performing services as guardians.

The second type of educational activity takes place through more formal media. A FOCAS brochure had previously been developed, and 100 copies were distributed in the community. The community at large had additional opportunities to learn about FOCAS and child welfare services through two newspaper articles and through appearances by the project coordinator—on three television talk shows and at 16 speaking engagements.

OBJECTIVES 4 AND 5—INCREASE CONTACTS WITH CHILDREN AND IDENTIFY MALTREATMENT

Objective 4 was to increase the number of contacts with children in substitute and own-home care, and Objective 5 was to identify and determine the extent of maltreatment of children in substitute and own-home care. These objectives are examined jointly due to their close relationship. Because the existence of guardians ad litem will mean increased contacts with the children in substitute and own-home care, it was thought that the likelihood of detecting child abuse and neglect might be increased.

The mean number of contacts with the children was 4.73 as of July 17, 1984, with a range from 0 (in the case of a child having just been assigned a guardian ad litem) to 16. This number was surprisingly low, and it became clear that the issue of contacts with children was more complex than anticipated. When individuals reported on the number of contacts, an additional issue related to Objective 4 became apparent. Beyond the issue regarding simple frequency of contact, and extenuating circumstances that can change the frequency from

child to child, the new issue addressed how or whether the contacts benefit the child.

In several cases where the frequency of contact was fairly low, respondents commented that a large number of contacts with the child was not necessarily as important as contacts with others involved in the case, especially when the child's permanent plan was unambiguous and straightforward. On the other hand, it was suggested that in situations where the plan was ambiguous, and thus a decision not as clear-cut, the guardian ad litem should be using frequent contact as a method for assessing the child's situation and reporting on his or her status. The guardian could obtain information and report it without the subjectivity or bias other parties might have because the guardian does not have a vested interest in a particular outcome.

The second issue to emerge from an examination of information related to Objective 4 concerns how and whether the contacts of the guardian ad litem benefit the child. There were several comments from foster parents that indicated dissatisfaction with the nature of the relationship between the guardian and the child. In some situations, the foster parents or institutional care providers felt the visits were just treats, not serious attempts to establish a relationship with the child. One individual questioned whether it was a good idea to bring yet another person into the world of a child already overwhelmed with adults due to the nature of the foster care system.

It is possible that some of the expressed dissatisfaction does indirectly relate to frequency of contact, in that the guardian ad litem could more easily establish a close relationship if contacts were more frequent. However, the dissatisfaction seemed more related to the quality of contacts. Some of the dissatisfaction may have been due to inappropriate expectations since, strictly speaking, the role of the guardian is to provide information and to advocate for the child, and a serious, personal relationship with the child is not necessary to accomplish this result.

The role of the guardian ad litem does depend on what the child needs and what is called for in the immediate situation. When it is clear that the child needs very personal contact and a close relationship, the guardian may not believe it is her place to provide that or may not feel her responsibilites include that role. Clearly, some of the guardians are simply not interested in that degree of involvement.

Some of the guardians do provide for needs of the children that go beyond their responsibilities as FOCAS volunteers. Examples reported by guardians included taking children to and from school, taking children to the pediatrician or for other medical care, celebrating their birthdays, taking a child on an Easter egg hunt, and

visiting a child at the babysitter's home when the foster parents had to go out of town.

Other persons associated with the project had mixed opinions about the benefits of using guardians ad litem. When asked whether the guardians were beneficial to children, six attorneys ad litem indicated they were, four indicated they were not, and one indicated that it was too early to tell. Foster parents/institutional staff generally indicated that the guardians were easy to work with but that the visits did not seem very beneficial to the children.

An additional question posed to foster parents/institutional care providers addressed whether the guardians ad litem had been helpful in three specific areas. As table II-2 indicates, the results were mixed and slightly more negative than positive. This table should be examined, with some caution, however, since several of the questionnaires were filled out by a single individual who was clearly unhappy with guardians. It appears that this individual had expectations that the guardian would be more helpful to her or more involved with the children.

Table II-2
Reports of Guardians' Helpfulness

Item	Yes	No	Don't Know or Not Applicable
Planning for the child's care	5	8	5
Getting access to additional resources for the child	6	7	5
Planning permanent placement for the child	5	8	5

Objective 5 is specifically concerned with reports of abuse and/or neglect from guardians ad litem. Cases of abuse or neglect are recorded by the guardian as part of a report filed after each visit to the child. As of July, 17, 1984, there were no reports of abuse or neglect. If a case had been reported, the guardian immediately would have advised the caseworkers and the coordinator of volunteers about the occurrence.

OBJECTIVE 6--PROBLEM SOLVING

Objective 6 was to assist in solving problems encountered in court-ordered care. Assistance in problem solving has been operationally defined as reports of the guardians ad litem to the courts, the sharing of information with attorneys ad litem and child welfare staff, and participation in case planning meetings/staffings.

According to the records of the FOCAS coordinator of volunteers, guardians ad litem submitted six reports to the court, made 36 contacts with attorneys ad litem, and appeared in court 29 times. In addition, they made 160 contacts with the child welfare staff.

Guardians ad litem also provide other types of assistance through activities such as collecting information or researching a child's case. In one situation the guardian was helpful in bringing forth names of potential witnesses that had been in the case records but not acted on for almost two years, and some of the witnesses agreed to testify on behalf of the child.

GENERAL COMMENTS

Overall, the FOCAS Project appears to be well-received by most individuals working with the children. When asked whether guardians ad litem should be assigned to children currently without one, 60 percent of the respondents indicated they should. When asked whether the guardian ad litem concept should be brought to other communities, all respondents favored this idea.

The guardians ad litem indicated that they felt their input had been well-received by the attorneys ad litem, child welfare workers, and foster parents/institutional staff. Guardians also reported that they felt their activities were helpful in planning for the child's care (63 percent), getting access to additional resources (53 percent), and planning permanent placement (37 percent).

Guardians ad litem were valued by others for the nature of the information they could provide. Comments reflected a favorable attitude toward the guardian's ability to express the viewpoint of the child and, in some cases, to make sure that the child does not get "caught" in the foster care system. Some respondents felt the objectivity of the guardian was an important factor in the success of the FOCAS Project and disposition of individual cases. One respondent commented that an additional benefit of the guardian ad litem concept was bringing members of the community into contact with the children and the child welfare system.

LIMITATIONS

Although the evaluation assessed the degree to which objectives are met, not all of the objectives can be assessed directly. Thus, a process rather than impact evaluation was carried out for those objectives.

A second limitation exists due to the low response rate to questionnaires. Four questionnaires should have been returned for each of the 23 children, for a total of 92 questionnaires. Of the expected total, only 72 were actually returned, with some questionnaires missing from each of four groups of respondents.

Another limitation is related to the methodology, since some individuals completed more than one questionnaire. For example, two or more children may have had the same caseworker or attorney ad litem. Thus, a positive or negative viewpoint may be overrepresented in the responses to questionnaires.

FOCAS PROJECT

Guardian Ad Litem Report

Date_____

Child's name _____

Guardian ad litem's name _____

Current placement setting: ☐ 1 Foster home

☐ 2 Institution

☐ 3 Own home

---

1. How long have you been this child's guardian ad litem?

   From __/__/__ to __/__/__
   Mo Day Yr Mo Day Yr

2. Do you feel you were given sufficient training to carry out your responsibilities?

   ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

3. How many visits to the child have you made in the past six months?

   ☐☐ (FILL IN NUMBER)

4. Do you feel that your reports and other input have been well-received by the:

   a. Attorney ad litem ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

   b. Child welfare workers ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

   c. Foster parents/ institutional staff ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

5. Have you helped the child in ways not required by the FOCAS project?

   ☐ 1 Yes--If yes, please give an example _____

   _____

   ☐ 2 No

6. Do you feel your activities have been helpful in:

(CHECK ONE FOR EACH ITEM)

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. Planning for the child's care	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
b. Getting access to additional resources for the child	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
c. Planning permanent placement for the child	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3

7. Additional comments/recommendations: _____

_____

_____

_____

FOCAS PROJECT

Attorney Ad litem Report

Date_____

Child's name_____

Attorney ad litem's name_____

Current placement setting: ☐1 Foster home

☐2 Institution

☐3 Own home

Guardian ad litem's name_____

---

1. How long have you been the attorney ad litem for this child?

   From __/__/__ to __/__/__
   Mo Day Yr Mo Day Yr

2. In the past six months, how many contacts (in-person, telephone, or written reports) have you had with the guardian ad litem?

   ☐☐(FILL IN NUMBER)

3. In the past six months, has there been a court review of this child's placement?

   ☐1 Yes ☐2 No (IF "No," GO TO QUESTION 5.)

4. For the court review, did you find the information provided to you by the guardian ad litem helpful/pertinent?

	Not at all helpful/ pertinent				Very helpful/ pertinent
(CIRCLE ONE)	1	2	3	4	5

(GO TO QUESTION 6.)

5. Even though a court review has not taken place in the past six months, are you finding the information provided to you by the guardian ad litem helpful/pertinent in preparing for the review?

	Not at all helpful/ pertinent				Very helpful/ pertinent
(CIRCLE ONE)	1	2	3	4	5

6. Do you feel that having a guardian ad litem has been beneficial for this child?

☐1 Yes ☐2 No ☐3 Too early to tell

Reasons: _____

_____

_____

7. Would you recommend that guardians ad litem be assigned to children who do not presently have them?

☐1 Yes ☐2 No ☐3 Too early to tell

Reasons: _____

_____

_____

8. COMMENTS _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

FOCAS PROJECT

Foster Parent/Institutional Staff Report

Date_____

Child's name_____

Foster parent's/
Institutional staff member's name_____

Current placement setting: ☐1 Foster home

☐2 Institution

☐3 Own home

Guardian ad litem's name_____

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1. How long has this child been in your care?

   From __/__/__ to __/__/__
   Mo Day Yr Mo Day Yr

2. Do you feel you were given sufficient orientation to the purpose and goals of the FOCAS (Foster Child Advocate Services) Program?

   ☐1 Yes ☐2 No

3. How many visits to the child were made by the guardian ad litem in the past six months?

   ☐☐ (FILL IN NUMBER)

4. Do you feel that the visits by the guardian ad litem have been beneficial to the child in your care?

☐1 Yes ☐2 No

5. Do you feel the guardian ad litem's activities have been helpful in:

(CHECK ONE FOR EACH ITEM)

	Yes	No	Don't Know
a. Your own planning for the child's care	☐1	☐2	☐3
b. Getting access to additional resources for the child	☐1	☐2	☐3
c. Planning permanent placement for the child	☐1	☐2	☐3

6. Have you found the guardian ad litem easy to work with?

☐1 Yes ☐2 No

Reasons: _____

_____

_____

7. COMMENTS _____

_____

_____

_____

FOCAS PROJECT

Guardian Ad Litem Report

Date _____

Child's name _____

Guardian ad litem's name _____

Current placement setting:
- ☐ 1 Foster home
- ☐ 2 Institution
- ☐ 3 Own home

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1. How long have you been this child's guardian ad litem?

   From __/__/__ (Mo Day Yr) to __/__/__ (Mo Day Yr)

2. Do you feel you were given sufficient training to carry out your responsibilities?

   ☐ 1 Yes ☐ 2 No

3. How many visits to the child have you made in the past six months?

   ☐☐ (FILL IN NUMBER)

4. Do you feel that your reports and other input have been well-received by the:

a.	Attorney ad litem	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 2 No
b.	Child welfare workers	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 2 No
c.	Foster parents/ institutional staff	☐ 1 Yes	☐ 2 No

5. Have you helped the child in ways not required by the FOCAS project?

   ☐ 1 Yes--If yes, please give an example _____

   _____

   ☐ 2 No

6. Do you feel your activities have been helpful in:

(CHECK ONE FOR EACH ITEM)

		Yes	No	Don't Know
a.	Planning for the child's care	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
b.	Getting access to additional resources for the child	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3
c.	Planning permanent placement for the child	☐ 1	☐ 2	☐ 3

7. Additional comments/recommendations: _____

_____

_____

_____